



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

CHILD FRIENDLY CHURCH AWARD SCHEME

Introduction:

Welcome to the *Child Friendly Church Award* scheme. The fact that you have requested this pack shows that your church recognises the importance of children's presence at the heart of the Christian community, as Jesus did when he placed a child in the midst of his disciples (Matthew 18: 1-5). In a society that also recognises the importance of children but sometimes perceives the Church as being less than welcoming to them, it is helpful to be able to have a public and visible indication when a particular church has taken steps to ensure that children enjoy their rightful place in its life.

The following self-assessment checklist will enable you to celebrate your existing achievements in making your church 'child friendly' and also to identify those areas where, with the guidance of the Diocesan Children's Officer, further developments can take place. Children's work is rich and multi-faceted and this is reflected in the number of questions to be considered. Please don't be put off by the length of the questionnaire – it will not be necessary to answer 'yes' to every one of the questions, and the Children's Officer will help decide which are essential, which can be left as projects for future work, and which are not applicable in your situation.

The important thing is to have the enthusiasm for making your children's work as good as it can be as you seek to build up the Body of Christ. If, when you have read through this pack, you think it will help you in this task then contact the Children's Officer to register with the scheme, and start finding out what wonderful work you already do as you begin completing the assessment!

Process for gaining the Child Friendly Church Award:

- Pack requested and sent out
- Church Council considers the criteria and decides to register
- Self-assessment process undertaken
- Form returned to Diocesan Children's Officer
- Children's Officer visits
- Children's Officer and Church representatives agree an action plan as necessary
- Action plan implemented
- Children's Officer seeks evidence in support of final self-assessment
- Presentation of Award in form of dated certificate and logo to display
- Church annual review of criteria
- Diocesan follow-up and re-award after 3 years

Continued

Summary of Criteria:

1. A Parish Child Protection Policy is in place and being implemented
2. The church buildings offer a safe environment
3. On-going training and support for leaders is in place
4. Nurture groups are provided for children and young people
5. There are opportunities for children to be included in child friendly church services
6. Suitable materials for under 5s are available in church
7. Children and young people are seen as equal members of the church community
8. Feedback is obtained from children and young people
9. There is a vision for Children's Work
10. There are outreach opportunities

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Church Council Self-Assessment

Name of Parish _____ Parish No. _____

Deanery _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Tel: _____

E-mail _____

Detailed criteria for self-assessment:

Please tick as appropriate or enter **n/a** if you consider a criterion is not applicable in your situation.

I. A Parish Child Protection Policy is in place and being implemented

	Yes	No	Un-sure
Is a parish policy in place that is in accordance with Diocesan Guidelines? *			
Is a Childline poster on display in every place where children meet? +			
Have you appointed a Child Protection Co-ordinator?			
Have all volunteers completed a CP2 Self Declaration Form? *			
Do all those who work with children on behalf of the church possess a Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Certificate in accordance with Diocesan Guidelines? #			
Are all volunteers authorised by the Church Council and issued with a Volunteer Agreement Form? *			
Have all volunteers been issued with Good Practice Guidelines? *			
Do all volunteers have access to the parish policy and Diocesan Guidelines for Child Protection?			
Do all volunteers know the actions to be taken if dealing with reports of abuse and do they have the appropriate contact information?			
Are all activities authorised by the Church Council?			
Are all the above activities adequately insured?			

* Model forms and policy document can be found in *Safeguarding Children: Handbook of Policy and Procedures 2009*, which is downloadable from the diocesan website www.manchester.anglican.org.

+ Childline posters can be ordered from the NSPCC Publications Department on 0207 825 7422

CRB forms can be ordered by your Child Protection Co-ordinator from Leslie Whittaker on 0161 828 1403

2. The church buildings offer a safe environment

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Do all children’s activities conform to the parish Health & Safety Policy?			
Are group areas warm and clean?			
Are all areas properly set up?			
Are risk assessments conducted in all places where children will be present, both on- and off-site?			
Are leaders aware of emergency procedures?			
Is there a fire drill at regular agreed intervals?			
Is there a list of designated First Aiders displayed?			
Do all volunteers know the location of telephones, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, accident/incident books?			
Are daily/weekly registers kept and archived indefinitely?			
Are adult/child ratios adhered to?			

3. On-going training and support for leaders is in place

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Does your church provide an on-going training programme for all those who come into contact with children? Including:			
Diocesan Child Protection training (with refresher every 2 years)			
Participation in the Bishop’s Certificate in Children’s Ministry (Level 1) **			
Are there opportunities to discover & update resources? #			
Are leaders affirmed or commissioned in a church service?			
Do you pray for your leaders?			
Are sufficient leaders trained in basic first aid to ensure that a trained adult is always present at a children’s session? +			

** Details on the diocesan website www.manchester.anglican.org

Resources are available on the diocesan website and at The Diocesan Resource Centre, Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester (please ring before visiting)

+ Contact St John Ambulance or the British Red Cross for advice on basic first aid training

4. Nurture groups are provided for children and young people

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Do you provide Sunday and/or mid-week groups for children and young people?			
Do leaders prepare carefully for their sessions?			
Are there opportunities for children to seek God through the Scriptures, the teachings of the church and their own personal experience?			
Is there regular prayer for these groups?			
Are you attempting to meet the needs of each child in terms of the development of their social, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual characteristics?			
Do you take into account children with special needs?			
Does your Church Council allocate a realistic budget for children’s work?			
Do you have strategies for maintaining a nurturing relationship between your church and its young people once they are teenagers?			

5. There are opportunities for children to engage in the worship of the church

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Are there times in your monthly service pattern when all ages worship together?			
Are these services designed to be all-age?			
Are the length, structure and presentation of the services appropriate for children?			
Are children’s leaders involved in any aspects of child friendly services?			
Are your service resources appropriate? e.g. service sheets/ hymn books?			
Has your church considered the possibility of admitting baptised children to Holy Communion before Confirmation?			

6. Suitable materials for under 5s are available in church

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Do parents/carers with young children know about your toilet/baby changing facilities?			
Do you allocate a special area for parents/carers to feel comfortable with babies and very young children?			
Do they have access to good quality quiet toys, books and activities?			
Is there a suitable place in which to feed very young children?			
Do you have a system for welcoming families? Eg 'Welcome Pack', pre/post baptism contact			
Are there key 'befriender/s' to these parents/carers and their children while they are in church?			
Is parenting support offered, including Christian parenting?			

7. Children and young people are seen as equal members of the church community

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Are you seeking to promote an all-age culture in church ie do you try and find ways to do all church activities in multi-generational groups?			
Do you invite your 16+ to contribute to your Church Council meetings and encourage them to be Council members?			
Are children and young people involved in the leading of services?			
Are children and young people involved in planning for worship and their group activities?			
Are they listened to / consulted on a range of church matters?			
Are they invited to be involved in the day to day running of the church?			
Do they have an input to the parish magazine or other parish publications?			

8. Feedback is obtained from children and young people

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Are there opportunities for leaders/parents/children to offer comments or recommendations when making plans for the future?			
Does the Church Council follow up/consider any comments / recommendations made by the children and young people?			

9. There is a vision for children’s work

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Is there a common vision for children’s work in your church?			
Is this vision reflected in your church vision statement?			
Is children’s work on your Church Council agenda at every meeting?			

10. There are outreach opportunities

	Yes	No	Un- sure
Does your church or any of its groups include opportunities for outreach?			
Do any schools in your parish bring groups to visit your church?			
Do any church leaders or members of the congregation have an input into any local schools?			
Does your church have links with any local community organisations that involve children and young people?			

GUIDANCE ON PROVIDING EVIDENCE

Well done! You have completed your self assessment audit and are ready to send it in to the Children's Officer. As evidence to back up your audit, and to save time when the Children's Officer comes out to meet you, could you please enclose the following documents and information with your self assessment:

- A copy of your **Child Protection Policy**, showing the name of your Child Protection Coordinator
- A blank copy of the **Volunteer Agreement Form** that you use
- A copy of the **Good Practice Guide** you issue to children's work volunteers
- A blank copy of the **Risk Assessment Form** you use
- A copy of any **emergency procedure documents** you issue to volunteers
- A recent **all-age worship service sheet**
- A photocopy of a recent **contribution to the parish magazine** or similar publication from the children (showing the date of the publication)
- A copy of the parish **Vision Statement for Children's Ministry**
- A copy of the **Parish Vision Statement**
- A dated copy of the last **PCC Agenda**, showing an item about Children's Ministry
- A list of the following information:
 - the date of the last children's **fire drill**
 - a list of all the Sunday and mid-week **groups involving children**, showing the number and age range of children registered for each group, and the names of the adult (ie over 18) volunteers who supervise each group
 - the names of any **published resources** you use in the children's groups
 - date of the last **Child Protection Training** provided for volunteers
 - the date of the last **Commissioning Service** for volunteers

The Visit

When the Children's Officer visits he will want to talk about some items on your self assessment sheet – particularly the ones you were not yet able to say 'yes' to.

He will also want to do a 'walk round' of the premises to see:

- the location of **Childline posters**
- the **rooms** in which your children's groups meet
- the location of **phones, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, the accident/incident book**
- the list of **first-aiders**
- **toilets** and **baby changing** facilities
- the **area** set aside **for babies and toddlers**

And he will want to see examples of:

- any **'home made' materials** you use in your children's groups, if you use these instead of published resources
- the **hymn books** and **service booklets** used when children are present in worship
- **toys** and **books** provided for young children
- your **Welcome Pack** for new/baptism families

DIOCESE OF MANCHSTER

CHILD FRIENDLY CHURCH AWARD SCHEME

When the Church Council has completed the self-assessment, please send it with accompanying evidence to the following address, and Steve will arrange a visit:

**The Revd Steve Dixon
Children's Work Officer
Manchester Diocese
Board of Education
4th Floor
Church House
90 Deansgate
Manchester
M3 2GH**

For further advice, ring Steve Dixon on 0161 828 1433
or e-mail stephendixon@manchester.anglican.org



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Manchester Diocesan Board of Education gratefully acknowledges the pioneering work of the Diocese of Liverpool Church Growth & Ecumenism Team in promoting the 'Child Friendly Church' initiative, and the developmental work carried out in the dioceses of Blackburn, Coventry and Sheffield. Much of the foregoing document is drawn from material produced by these dioceses.